SILTY RANGE SITE

1. TOPOGRAPHY

   a. This site is on nearly level to rolling glacial till plains, lake plains, and on high stream terraces. Slopes are typically from one to nine percent.

2. SOILS

   a. These are deep and moderately deep, well drained, medium and moderately fine textured soils. Permeability is moderate and available water capacity is usually high or very high.

   b. Soil taxonomic units common to this site are:

      Barnes loam and clay loam
      Edgeley loam and clay loam
      Heimdal loam
      Gardena loam and silt loam
      Overly silt loam and silty clay loam
      Svea loam and clay loam

      Refer to Section II-A for a complete list of soil taxonomic units and range sites.

3. POTENTIAL VEGETATION

   a. This site is dominated by cool-season midgrasses. Principal plants are western wheatgrass, needleandthread, green needlegrass, and Kentucky bluegrass. Other species are blue grama, porcupinegrass, bearded wheatgrass, prairie junegrass, prairie dropseed, and upland sedges. A variety of forb species make up about 15 percent of the total herbage production. Small amounts of woody species may occur on the site.

   b. Continued heavy grazing by cattle results in a decrease of green needlegrass, porcupinegrass, prairie dropseed, and bearded wheatgrass. Grasses such as needleandthread and western wheatgrass increase initially and then decrease if heavy grazing is continued. Species that increase are blue grama, Kentucky bluegrass, upland sedges, and fringed sagebrush.

      Further deterioration of the site results in a dominance of short grasses, upland sedges, fringed sagebrush, and undesirable forb species.

c. Approximate total annual production of this site in excellent condition is from 2350 to 3150 pounds of air-dry herbage per acre, depending on growing conditions.

d. A detailed description of the vegetation in excellent condition is as follows:

Relative Percent Composition of the Potential Vegetation

	Mean Productivity	
	lbs/acre	% composition
Grasses		
Western wheatgrass	550	20
Needleandthread	275	10
Green needlegrass	275	10
Porcupinegrass	138	5
Bearded wheatgrass	138	5
Blue grama	137	5
Prairie dropseed Prairie junegrass Big bluestem Sideoats grama	137	5
~~Kentucky bluegrass~~ Other grasses	275	10
Grasslikes		
Penn sedge Needleleaf sedge Other sedges	275	10
Forbs		
Woolly goldenrod Heath aster Western yarrow Gray sagewort Stiff sunflower Dotted gayfeather Silverleaf scurfpea Other forbs	413	15
Shrubs and half-shrubs		
Fringed sagebrush Western snowberry Prairie rose Other shrubs	137	5
Total	2750	100

Altamont Vegetation Zone

3--Silty Range Site

4. DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK GRAZING VALUE

a. This site is suitable for both cattle and sheep. The best season of grazing is summer; however, the site also has spring and fall grazing value. Silty range sites grazed during the spring need to be rested periodically to improve and maintain plant composition.

5. WILDLIFE NATIVE TO THE SITE

a. This site is used by the white-tailed deer and antelope. Smaller mammals commonly found are the jackrabbit, red fox, and pocket gopher. Upland birds depending on this site for part of their natural habitat are the sharp-tailed grouse, mourning dove, and meadowlark. Songbirds commonly found are the lark bunting, horned lark, chestnut-collared longspur, and bobolink. Sites traversed by channels with trees and shrubs attract several more species of birds such as the red-winged blackbird, brown thrasher, eastern kingbird, and yellow warbler. Sites with water attract waterfowl such as the mallard, pintail, blue-winged teal, and shoveller.

6. ESTHETIC AND RELATED VALUES

a. This site makes up a large part of the rolling grasslands and gives one the enjoyment of open space. A large variety of flowering plants add color to the landscape in spring and summer. Recreational activities assocated with this site are hunting, hiking, horseback riding, plant study, and winter sports.

7. HYDROLOGIC CHARACTERISTICS

a. This site is common to most watersheds and is extensive in this vegetation zone. Runoff is slow to medium on good to excellent condition, properly grazed range. Water transmission rate of the soil is moderate.

8. A TYPICAL SITE LOCATION IN THIS AREA IS AS FOLLOWS